



MBSC Monthly

NEWSLETTER FROM THE MIDDLETON BASEBALL & SOFTBALL COMMISSION

Mark Your Calendar Now!

- Nov 8 • MBSC Commission Meeting 7:30pm
 - Jan 16 • Brewer's Banquet – Middleton Marriott
 - Feb 27-28 • Registration 6pm-8pm – MHS LMC
 - Mar 5-6 • Registration 6pm-8pm – MHS LMC
 - April 14 • Baseball Tryouts – NO ALTERNATIVE DATES
 - April 15 • Softball Tryouts – NO ALTERNATIVE DATES
- **Go to mbscwi.com for times and/or if you need additional information.

Coaches Wanted for 2012

If you or someone you know is thinking about coaching an MBSC softball or baseball team in 2012 we want to meet you or them. MBSC is encouraging anyone that would like to coach next season to contact one of the league directors this fall so we can plan our seasons better. It is often thought that coaches for all teams are pre-selected and therefore discourages new volunteers from stepping forward each season. This misunderstanding limits the opportunities for MBSC to include more kids in programs at all levels. MBSC is committed to teaching all coaches, with any level of experience, how to improve their coaching ability and provide our players the best possible opportunity to improve their playing skills. Look at the MBSC directory and contact the respective league director for the level you are considering coaching and they will answer any questions you might have.

Babe Ruth League and Cal Ripken League have many resources that help coaches learn how to improve the skills of youth players. The article "Mixing it up with the tee" (Page 2) is a good article that parents or coaches can give to their players to use during the off season. Remember, great hitters are not made during the season. Great Hitters are made during the OFF SEASON! So read the article, get rid of the computer games and TV clickers, and get to work.

Software Updates for MBSC

MBSC has purchased and is in the process of implementing new software which will improve registration, payments, field scheduling, and help track volunteer hours. Additionally, the software will allow us to improve our website as we continue to improve how we operate. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we can continue to improve.

Election Results

MBSC conducted its annual board and commission elections at the meeting on October 11.

Don Stephan was elected Vice President. Re-elected as commission members: Stan Haack, Jerry Gurtner, Mike Land, Doug Olstad, Michelle Schreier, and Jay Smith. New commission members: Jeff Delabarre, Arin Oppermann, Bob Banke, Steve Kelliher, and Dana Henke

Remain as associate members: Brenda Ziegler, Dan Hewuse, and Brad Woodall.

Volunteer Opportunities

MBSC continues to have volunteer opportunities present themselves. In 2012, MBSC will require someone to step to the plate and take the position of Firefighters Memorial Park **Concession Stand Manager**. A job description will be published next month. However, we wanted to spread the word for this position as it is vital to the success of our organization.

Additionally, MBSC is seeking a potential **Website Manager** to help improve and manage the website content, and bring new ideas to this important way to communicate with our families. If you are skilled in this area and have the desire to help improve our website, please contact Jay Smith at jsmi17@amfam.com with your credentials and willingness to help.



Mixing it up with the tee

By Cal & Bill Ripken

When players hit off of the batting tee, we like to have them focus solely on their weight shift – gathering all of their weight and energy by shifting to the back foot before exploding forward. We often say, “You have to go back to go forward.”

Focusing on a specific component of the swing allows players to get the feel for each individual piece of the swing before facing live pitching. It’s impossible for a player to think about mechanics and complicated hitting instruction when a hard ball is being thrown at him or her.

That’s why we use the drill sessions for instruction and prefer to call batting practice “free hitting.”



During batting practice we simply observe and let the kids have fun, making notes about what drills they need to spend more time on during practice to improve their swings.

But let’s be honest. Getting kids – or adults, for that matter – to hit off of a batting tee, concentrating on the same thing over and over, can be challenging. At some point boredom sets in. But hitting off a tee can reveal some major flaws in the swing, and the tee is usually the easiest place to correct those flaws because the ball is stationary.

If you are confident that your players have grasped the concept of weight shift, consider incorporating the following advanced drills as part of your tee work. Never lose sight of the fact that the primary objective of tee hitting is to develop proper weight shift.

Use the high tee to prevent dropping of the hands

One of the most common mistakes young hitters make is to drop their hands as the ball approaches. This leads to a long upper-cut swing in which the shoulders don’t remain level (back shoulder drops) and the bat only briefly

crosses through the same plane along which the pitch is traveling. The bat head actually seems to come around the ball in a sweeping motion rather than being taken directly to the ball. This problem can become very evident when players hit off of the tee, because they tend to drop their hands and back shoulders in an attempt to elevate the ball.

A variation of the tee drill that Jorge Posada and Tino Martinez used can help correct this problem. They would put a ball on the tee and raise it to the top of the strike zone. With the ball in that position they shift their weight back and then come forward, attempting to swing down to the ball. The object is to hit a hard line drive by staying on top of the ball. To accomplish this, there is no way that a batter can drop the hands.

Adjust tee position to fix “pulling off”

Another common mistake young hitters make is pulling their front shoulders away from the ball (“pulling off” the pitch) as it approaches home plate. Many times this is a result of fear. We’ll often use short toss from the front to correct this problem, but sometimes it can be easier to start by using the batting tee.

Again, we want the players to focus on shifting their weight back before coming forward. When a kid pulls off on a pitch, they lose power when hitting any pitch except one on the inside part of the plate. They may even miss the pitch on the outside half altogether. The best weight shift in the world can be rendered meaningless if the movement forward isn’t a short, soft stride toward the pitcher.

To help correct this with the tee, simply move the entire tee in such a way that it simulates a pitch on the outside half of the plate. Have the batter assume a normal stance, shift the weight back before coming forward with a short stride toward the pitcher (or slightly toward the ball) and attempt to hit a line drive to the opposite field. If the player is pulling weak ground balls or hitting the ball off the end of the bat, he or she is “pulling off” the ball and needs to concentrate on taking the stride and the front shoulder more toward the pitcher or the ball. Before correcting players who are struggling with this, be sure that they aren’t simply taking their eyes off the ball before contact.



One word of caution before trying this variation of the tee drill: Most coaches don't understand the proper tee placement for hitting the outside pitch. It's not good enough just to move the tee to the front part of the outside of the plate. If you look at still photos of the great hitters, they hit the inside pitch well out in front of home plate, the pitch down the middle slightly in front of home plate and the outside pitch several inches behind the front edge of home plate. Hitting these pitches in this manner allows the bat head to take the most direct path to the ball, which means that the hitter's mechanics are fundamentally sound. This increases the batter's chances of driving the ball up the middle or the opposite way.

So, when setting up the tee to simulate an outside pitch in the location that it should be hit, move the entire tee so that the ball is over the outside part of the plate about four to six inches behind the front edge (toward the catcher).

Use the Big Ball Drill to encourage follow through

Many young players fail to follow through or let their swings finish properly. The result is much slower bat speed at the point of contact.

Because so many young players seem to struggle with this concept, we've come up with a simple variation of the tee drill to help players finish their swings. We call it the Big Ball Drill.

All that is needed for the Big Ball Drill is a standard batting tee, a rubber playground ball or kickball (soccer or basketball size), a net or screen to hit into, a bat and the special ingredient, a regular household plunger. Yes, a plunger.

To get started, slide the handle of the plunger into the barrel of the tee. Now, you have a modified "cup" in which to place the big ball—it will do a much better job of holding the ball in place.

Set the big ball in the plunger. The batter follows the principles of the regular tee drill, shifting all the weight to the back foot, gathering his or her energy before exploding forward and swinging as hard as possible.

Just like with the regular tee drill, the weight should go straight back and straight forward,

and the swing should be down and direct to the ball. The point of emphasis for this drill is to make sure that the batter swings hard and concentrates on swinging through the ball and following through properly.

For years coaches have had players swing at tires to help them strengthen their wrists and forearms while also improving their ability to follow through. The spirit behind the Big Ball Drill is similar. After a player takes 10 swings at a big rubber ball, his or her wrists and forearms should be fatigued, especially if the follow through is executed correctly each time. In order for the bat to wrap around the front shoulder correctly, the batter must really focus on accelerating the bat through the hitting zone and swinging through the ball. After doing this a few times with the big rubber ball, the follow through should come naturally when the player hits a real baseball off of the tee.

"Get to it and through it," is a good way to emphasize this lesson.

Obviously this is a fun variation to the basic tee drill that the kids really get a kick out of. Sometimes kids get bored with the basic tee drill or think it is beneath them. Hopefully, these variations will help you keep it interesting for the kids and keep them in love with the game.

MCHUMOR.COM by T. McCracken



"A good, but not a grand slam!"

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2012 State Baseball Tournaments

State Tournaments sites and dates were recently awarded for the 2012 baseball season.

MBSC programs always seem to have great success so it is never too early to start planning for next summer.

The tournaments are listed below.

- 8 year old machine pitch-Janesville, July 13-14-15
- 9 year old, Neenah, July 12-13-14-15
- 10 year old, Janesville, July 14-18
- 11 year old 60", Dodgeville, July 14-18
- 11 year old 70". Janesville, July 14-18
- 12 year old 60", Marinette, July 14-18
- 12 year old 70", Neenah, July 14-18
- 13 year old, Green Bay, July 14-18
- 14 year old, Eau Claire, July 14-18
- 15 year old, Sauk Prairie, July 14-18
- 16-18 year old, Dodgeville, June 30-July 5

"You know your talent. You know if you work hard, your hard work is going to pay off one day."

~Albert Pujols, World Champion

2011-2012 Calendar of Events

MBSC Commission Meetings

Edgewood College, Deming Way

Next one...Nov 8th at 7:30PM

(Baseball subcommittee meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month, next one...Dec 6th at 7:30PM)

Other Important Dates

January 8-29 • (Sundays) Softball Pitching Clinic Grades 3-8***

Feb 27-28 • Registration 6PM-8PM MHS LMC

Mar 5-6 • Registration continues 6PM-8PM MHS LMC

**Mar 24 or 31 (tbd) • Spring Workday at FFMP & Adler

April 14 • Baseball Tryouts – NO alternative dates

April 15 • Softball Tryouts – NO alternative dates

**May 20 • 8th Annual Pig Roast Fundraiser 12PM-8PM

May 21 • Cal Ripken and 13s Babe Ruth Seasons Open

June 11 • Recreational baseball & softball starts

**June 17 • Special Olympics Softball Invitational

June 20 • Cardinal Youth Camp at FFMP

Advanced Hitting, Pitching/Catching

June 23-24 • Cardinal Dugout Club Youth Baseball Tourney

July 13-15 • MBSC Softball Tournament (U10-U14)

**August 8-9 • Midwest Fastpitch Softball Showcase

**August 11 • Fall Workday at FFMP & Adler

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Visit mbscwi.com for additional information

*** flyer for girls' winter softball pitching clinic at this site

<https://sites.google.com/site/middletonsoftball/winterpitchingclinic>

Sponsors

This month's sponsors include Gunderson Funeral Homes and WISCO Group. Please patronize our sponsors as often as possible. Thank You!



Do you have something for the newsletter?

The MBSC newsletter welcomes all your ideas. Anyone is encouraged to submit articles, facts, and information regarding games and performance of your teams. We will publish as many highlights from the upcoming seasons as possible. We also welcome photos from your games and/or teams. Contact Mike Schoonveld at mike.schoonveld@mbscwi.com.





MBSC Members Directory

Member	Program Director	Phone	Email
Mike Hinz, President		831-8186 h 575-2401 c	hinz13@tds.net
Don Stephan, Vice President	Cal Ripken	833-3103 h 235-2489 c	dn751@tds.net
Stan Haack, Treasurer		527-4463 h 358-0125 c	shaack@bruceco.com
Renee Kalscheuer, Asst Treas		577-8858 c	reneekal@hotmail.com
Brian Drunasky, Secretary	Legion	836-5553-h 957-3868-c	
Ken Maly		836-4730 h 219-8467 c	kenmaly@charter.net
Scott Campbell		335-2966 c	scampbell@edgewood.edu
Jerry Gurtner	Triple A	829-1959 h 225-2273 c	j.gurtner@charter.net
Jeff Delabarre	South Central – U10		
Mike Land		203-5389 h 770-5645 c	michael.land@bakertilly.com
Doug Olstad	Softball Overall Program Director	831-3651 h 628-1563 c	doug.olstad@springwindowfashion.com
Mike Schoonveld	Babe Ruth	798-1001-h 322-2359-c	tincup@chorus.net mikes@renschler.com
Michelle Schreier		513-3605 h 829-9446 w	mschreier33@gmail.com
Tom Schmitt, Past President	Pepper	836-1070 h 712-0200 c	coachs35@tds.net tschmitt@mcpasd.k12.wi.us
Jay Smith		833-8792 h 445-3611 c	jsmi17@amfam.com
Steve Kelliher		203-5772-h 516-4535-c	
Arin Oppermann			
Bob Banke	South Central – U14		
Dana Henke			
Associate Members			
Brad Woodall	Instructional	213-6261-c	brad@woodalltraining.com
Amy Gangl	Little Brewers & Cardinals	843-7956-h 203-5859-c	
Dan Hewuse		770-5930-c	
Brenda Ziegler	Softball Minor and Major	836-5632 h 235-6298	playball13@hotmail.com
Non-Member Programs Directors			
Dan Stormer	South Central – U16/18	798-1262 h 209-4106	dlas@chorus.net
Bob Carr	South Central – U16/18		
Jeff Sander	South Central – U10		
Tom Maas	South Central – U12		

Mission Statement: MBSC shall administer and implement a complete, healthful, meaningful and wholesome community baseball and softball program, which will afford each participant the opportunity to play organized ball, which is dedicated to the highest standards of sportsmanship, fair play and competition.



MBSC Committees

Concessions: Renee Kalscheuer, Michelle Schreier, Brenda Delabarre

Tournaments: Jay Smith, Brad Novinski, Brian Drunasky

Fund Raising: Mike Land, Brenda Delabarre

Communications/Newsletter: Mike Schoonveld

Online Registration/Scheduling Software: Michelle Schreier

Technology/Website: Jay Smith, Mike Schoonveld

Evaluations: Open

Field Scheduling: Mike Hinz

Player & Coach Development: Tom Schmitt, Steve Kelliher, Brad Woodall, Scott Campbell, Dan Hewuse

Player Agent: Open

Pig Roast/Silent Auction: Doug Olstad, Jerry Gurtner, Mike Land, Tom Schmitt, Scott Campbell, Mike Schoonveld, Ken Maly, Dan Stormer

Ad Hoc: Open

Volunteer Coordinator: Amy Gangl, Ken Maly, Doug Olstad

Coaches Meeting: Tom Schmitt, Don Stephan

Purchasing: Don Stephan, Jerry Gurtner

Safety: Steve Kelliher, Jay Smith, Tom Schmitt, Stan Haack

Job Descriptions: Scott Campbell

Newsletter: Mike Schoonveld, Editor • Connie Dey-Marcos, Layout & Design

